CIPRIANO CASTRO HAD BAD EXAMPLE

Dreamers of Power Brought Woe to South America.

NOT ALL OPERA BOUFFE WAR

Some of the Leaders Plunged Their Countries Into Real Fighting. Santos and Latone, of Uruguay; Rosas, of Argentina, and Dom Pedro, of Brazil, Faced Dangers.

There used to be a joke on the vaudeville stage that seldom failed to bring a laugh. Two men are making a bet.

"Who'll hold the money?" asks one.

"Let the orchestra leader hold it."

"Yes; but who will hold him?"

That's the way it is with the South American republics. It is confessed, even by those who hate dictatorship, that the authority must rest in the hands of a strong man. The question is, "Who will hold this strong man?"

Venezuela needed a man who could whip the insurgent spirits into obedience, and crush armed rebellion. The man was found in Cipriano Castro. Castro, the mountaineer, with only his steel nerve and self-confidence, and a handful of men who adored him, created a dictatorship out of chaos. Alas! there was nobody to hold Castro, says a writer in the New York Post.

So whether Castro spends his last days, riding in the Bois de Boulogne and sitting in a box at the Comique, or whether he rounds out a good full term as master of Venezuela's fate, it's all the same to the republic he has ruled so forcibly. If it isn't Castro, it's some one else; or if it isn't some one else, it is nobody, which is worse.

And has Castro made money out of the presidency? "Como no?" the Venezuelans would say, with a shrug of the shoulders. Why not? Does anybody think he was in politics for hygienic purposes?

Politics is the sport of Latin-America. It takes the place of football as an exercise of brawn and cunning. The South Americans do not play other games, except very primitive ones. Politics they are brought up on, live in, and, sometimes die of.

Some Smaller Castros.

South America is always full of Castros—smaller Castros, to be sure, but full of like ideas and only lacking the genius to carry them out. In Argentina, there is Julio Roca. Roca is a man of ability, of courage, of tact. He is an old man now, but from 1880, when he was first elected President of the Argentine Republic, until the present day, he has been the power behind the executive chair, when he has not been in it himself.

Roca was an Indian fighter, as spectacular as our Custer, and luckier. He was the first Argentine to show his people that the Indians were not the terrible foemen they had been imagined. He went out against them with a few thousand gauchos (the cowboys of Argentina) and whipped them so considerably that they are still wandering in all directions. Then Roca made himself President. And he managed so well—for himself—that a few years ago one of the Buenos Ayres newspapers ingeniously inquired, "Gen. Roca, where did you get it?" The journal was referring, of course, to the immense fortune displayed by the man who previous to 1880, had been imbibing ten-centavo drinks in the boulevard cafes, and had brushed his own uniform, as a junior army officer.

In Uruguay.

Then there was Gen. Santos, in Uruguay, and his predecessor, Col. Latorre. Latorre tried to beat some recognition of authority into the stubborn heads of the pugnacious Uruguayans, but seeing that it was an all-life job, he took what he could get, and went his way.

Santos had as little success. When he had succeeded in making enemies enough, he gathered what was left of the treasury, and announced that he was going to Europe for a rest. The day before he sailed, the legislature at Montevideo met and passed a resolution to the effect that they didn't know how the country could possibly get along without him, and tears were shed "as fast as the Arabian trees their medicinal gum." On the following day, as soon as the ship was well out of the harbor, the legislators met again and declared their late beloved president an outlaw, putting a price on his head if he should ever enter the country again.

Even Castro, however, successful as he has been in his own republic, is a mere tyro compared with some of the South American dictators who preceded him. They were not content with managing the affairs of their own country; they dreamed dreams of empire. They saw themselves at the head of a mighty nation embracing the whole continent, from Terra del Fuego to Panama isthmus. Of course, they failed; but they left their own countries in welters of blood when they finally gave up the task.

Too often we of the Northern continent think of these wars in South America as opera-bouffe. Sometimes, perhaps, there is a comic struggle among politicians on the street corners, and the press representatives exaggerate it into civil strife; but the real fighting that has been done in the last 100 years, south of the Big Ditch, has been anything but humorous. When half-naked men and women swim, axes in hand, to climb aboard an attacking war ship, as the Paraguayans did during their terrible war with the Allies, there must be real combative stuff in the people.

The Great Francia.

It was in this same strange little country, Paraguay, far up inland, between Brazil and Argentina, that the greatest ruler South America ever produced—Jose Rodriguez Gaspar Francia—held sway for twenty-five years. There have been greater men in the South, possibly. Bolivar was a man of purer motives. The Argentine general, San Martin, was more brilliant in warfare. But Francia was thought worthy by Carlyle of a place in "Heroes and Hero Worship," and surely his career was a marvelous one.

Ruthless, cruel, arbitrary, cold-blooded was Francia—all of these; and he pursued such a course of insularity that not only did Paraguay have no relations with other countries, but a foreigner once within the borders found it almost impossible to get away. Yet he gave an administration that raised the productive power of the people beyond what it had ever been. While he lived no one dared pronounce his name aloud on the streets. When he died he was referred to in awe-struck tones for several years as "El Defunto"—the Dead Man.

It was after Francia's death that the dreamer of empire came along to fill to overflowing Paraguay's cup of woe. His name was Francisco Lopez. He was a son of one of the "consuls" who succeeded to the power of Francia, and it was upon the death of his father, Carlos, that he calmly declared himself dictator.

Dreams of Lopez.

To get an idea of what Francisco's head was stuffed with, you have to remember that he had been in Europe for several years; that they were still talking somewhat of Napoleon in the circles which he frequented. Lopez was attractive, vivacious, and intelligent, and could be flattered. So when they hinted that such a man as he might control the fortunes of South America, he saw himself another conquering hero like the little artilleryman of Brienne. The disillusionment was paid for by the Paraguayans at the highest price ever contributed by a nation in a similar cause.

In 1863, while our own civil war was in progress, there was a civil war in Uruguay. The party which was in power at Montevideo was to the liking of Lopez, and in agreement with his plans for the future, but the governments at Buenos Ayres and Rio de Janeiro favored the colors of the rebel leader Flore. They accordingly furnished him what aid was at their disposal.

Very quickly Lopez sent both Brazil and Argentina notes saying that they must keep their fingers out of the Uruguayan plot. The big countries did not know whether to be amused or angry. Here was this little upstart, at the head of the supposedly poorest nation in South America, atempting to dictate terms to them! Finally they replied by sending a gunboat or two up the river to "make a demonstration."

The counter demonstration of Lopez showed that he meant business. By the 1st of August, 1864, he had massed an army of 64,000 men, the most formidable force in numbers ever gathered on the continent. They were armed with rusty old flintlocks, machetes, and axes, and were only half-clothed, but they were the most obedient servants any master ever had. It is said that floggings were received by the soldiers complacently, only bringing from them the remark: "If our father does not flog us, who will?" They called their officers "father."

Struck Blow at Brazil.

With this force Lopez struck a blow at Brazil, in the province of Matto Grosso; and whereas he could readily march on them from his position, the only adequate attack they could make on Paraguay was from the south, by way of the Plata River, and then only after a journey of 2,000 miles.

After a battle in which Lopez was defeated came a bloody struggle at a little trading post called Curapayty. If there were ever any accusations of opera-bouffe warfare against either Brazilian or Paraguayans, this was the final refutation. An English engineer had fortified a position for Lopez, at a place which was in itself almost impregnable. Lopez had 20,000 soldiers, and a good battery, modern for that time. Against this position 18,000 Brazilian soldiers threw themselves three times, in the face of a hail of canister. Half their number were killed or wounded; yet not until the word of retreat was given did they retire.

The sun of the fortunes of Lopez, however, was going down. Cholera devastated his camps, and at Humaita, on the Paraguay River, he was defeated by the allied forces of Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. On March 1, 1870, in an attempt to escape, the dictator was speared by a common soldier. Thus perished one of the South Americans who in the wild desire for personal aggrandizement, saw his country ruined about his feet. At the close of the war scarcely one-tenth of the male population was alive. The women (who had also fought side by side with the men) had to found, practically, a new country, through their valor and labor.

Rosas, of Argentina.

Another soldier who attempted to carry into effect his monarchical dreams was Juan Manuel Rosas, of Argentina. He lived many years before Lopez, and was a different kind of man. Lopez had the theory of war; Rosas had had the practice. Lopez spent his youth surrounded by enervating luxuries; Rosas had plenty of money, but preferred to live a Jesse James kind of existence on the rolling prairies of his father's estate, south of Buenos Ayres. He was a dare-devil horseman—the "King of the Pampas," some called him—and he was the idol of the gauchos.

In 1829 the victories of Gen. Lavalle over insurgent spirits made that warrior dictator. But Lavalle was worried by the pretensions of such men as Paz, in the province of Cordoba, and Quiroga, in the province of Cuyo, and finally gave up his unhealthful position. The time was ripe for a strong man, with an iron hand and equally hard heart. Rosas came to the front; drove the rebels from their strongholds, and was named by a terrorized legislature "Restorer of the Laws." "The sum of public power" was officially given him by statute; and Rosas proceeded to make the utmost dividends from that sum.

Rosas established a reign of terror that made itself felt even in Europe. He replaced the old Buenos Ayres colors of blue and white by his own color, red. It was death to be seen wearing blue in any form in the streets. His gang of desperadoes, recruited from the cowboys of the plains, scoured the city of Buenos Ayres, murdering, pillaging, as they pleased. They called themselves "The Massorca," and it was a kind of black hand organization, according to the stories told of its warnings, its extortions, and crimes.

Oversteps the Bounds.

But at last Rosas, who was reaching out in all directions for territory and money, and who had unquestionably made plans for warfare against the neighboring "republics," overstepped the bounds. He quarreled with Great Britain and France; he defied their combined power, and insulted their representatives. Both sent fleets to Argentina, but somehow they did not see fit to press the case against the erupting dictator, and received his flauntings humbly.

In 1846 Urquiza, Rosas' "Marshal Ney," turned against him. The ambitious plotter was defeated in a bloody struggle at Caseros, Argentina, and had to retreat to his stronghold in Buenos Ayres. Public sentiment, which was with him during his success, turned against him in his discomfiture. He was hooted in the streets, and finally took refuge on a British man-o'-war, on his way to that gayest of sad exiles—Paris. The only monument to his memory is the superb park just outside Buenos Ayres, which had been his princely estate.

Dom Pedro, of Brazil.

Another South American who fell victim to his own unlimited power and ambition was Dom Pedro I, of Brazil. Pedro was an emperor by title; the others were absolute monarchs in fact—only that difference lay between them. And Pedro was not lacking the abilities of his Spanish-American co-dictators, either; but his excesses left him little time to display them.

It must be remembered that Brazil, of all the South American countries, is Portuguese in language, customs, and blood. When the disreputable John V died in Portugal, Dom Pedro had to choose whether he would become ruler of Portugal or Brazil. He elected to stay in South America, unfortunately for both himself and the Brazilians. So he put his daughter, Maria Gloria, seven years of age, on the throne at home, and went to work to create a bigger, noisier Brazil. He went far, but not far enough.

Pedro's first attempt was a war with Argentina, which proved disastrous. The British admiral, Brown, was in the service of the Argentines, at the head of a fleet of Baltimore clippers that were faster and friskier than anything marine the Brazilians or Portuguese had ever seen. Brown promptly made the shipping of the Brazilian ports a thing of the past tense. Then the great general, Alvear, whipped Pedro's troops at Ituzaingo, and compelled the Emperor to sue for peace.

Newspapers Attack Him.

At home there was trouble for Pedro while he was watching the ill luck of his army and navy. The newspapers, which he had successfully muzzled for some years, broke loose. Evaristo da Veiga, one of the most brilliant journalists of South American history, published a newspaper which called itself Aurora Fluminense. An open-mouthed newspaper and an absolute monarch cannot exist in the same country; in this case the newspaper survived the competition. Pedro, who had declared that he would "do everything for the people, but nothing by the people," finally suffered the same fate as Rosas did after him—he was hooted in the streets by his own people. He abdicated in 1831, though all Europe tried to hold him in his seat.

Morally, Dom Pedro was the worst of all South American rulers-by-force. Francia was no saint, nor Lopez, nor Rosas, but Pedro touched the depths of degeneracy. He harangued ill-smelling mobs in the street; he beat soldiers with his own hands (once nearly cutting his own leg off with a sword-stroke intended for a poor recalcitrant), and once he nearly killed a party of court ladies by upsetting purposely a carriage. Pedro was a kind of Falstaff in his pranks, but withal a dangerous, poisonous dictator.

These are a few of the men who have, during a century, brought dishonor and defeat to their South American countries. They held their subjects in check wonderfully well, but over their personal ambitions they had no control. Possibly Cipriano Castro, reading of his predecessors on uneasy heights of power, decided to be rid of the troubles and tribulations of his country, but he, too, apparently has been used to power too long to settle down anywhere as a plain citizen. Where will his ambition lead him?

Prophecies Got on Europe's Nerves.

From the London Chronicle.

After several earthquake shocks in 1761 prophecies of the total destruction of the city were rife. April 5 was the date named for the catastrophe, and for days before the roads from town were thronged with the vehicles of those who were seeking safety in flight, in spite of the threat of one of the papers of the day to publish the names of all such cowards. Even the more courageous elected to pass their nights out of doors, Hyde Park being the most popular camping ground.

Nothing ever got on the nerves of Europe as the coming of the first thousandth year of the Christian era. The churches were thronged, the houses deserted, and all good Christians slept in the open in readiness for that end of the world which was expected to come at the proper date.

ENTERTAINED TWO KINGS.

DUCHESS OF MANCHESTER.

Titled woman who was Miss Zimmerman, daughter of the Cincinnati millionaire, who recently entertained King Edward and King Alfonso of Spain at her villa near San Sebastian. The duchess is shown with her son and heir, Lord Mandeville.

WAR OR BANKRUPTCY

Lewis Nixon So Interprets Rivalry Between England and Germany Over Dreadnoughts.

Seven years ago the British battle ship Royal Sovereign was completed. It was regarded, even by Great Britain, which had always led in the building of powerful war craft, as a tremendous ship, says Allan L. Benson in the Philadelphia Public Ledger. It carried four 13-inch guns and thirty-eight smaller ones, while 712 men were required to do the work aboard. And the Royal Sovereign cost $4,195,680. Our fine ship, the Missouri, which was completed the same year, cost only $2,885,000.

Seven years ago no Briton could look far enough ahead to see the time when his country could not be the mistress of the seas. Her supremacy was unquestioned.

Proceeding on the two-power plan, she had a comfortable margin over the fleets of any pair of nations that might take up arms against her. The Briton, indeed, was a complaisant individual—and he seemed to have reason to be.

Three years ago the Dreadnought was completed. And with what wild British hurrahs! Seventeen thousand and nine hundred tons of fighting steel! Twenty-three thousand horsepower to drive the steel along! Ten 12-inch guns and ninety smaller ones! Eight hundred and sixty-five men constituted her officers and crew! And she cost $3,065,500! Who else beside England could talk about being mistress of the seas with the Dreadnought in the water?

England's Pride Flattered.

Germany could, but she did not—she only laid the keel of the Nassau, and she laid it without sputter or fireworks. And when the British heard that the Nassau was to be built the news flattered their national pride. For was not this German ship to be another Dreadnought? She was to be 190 tons lighter, it was true, but on the other hand, her engines were to have 1,000 more horsepower than those of England's greatest war craft. Indeed, it was a fine spectacle for a proud Britisher to behold—the world looking to him for instruction with regard to battle ship building. For, let it be recalled, about the same time we laid the keel of the North Dakota, which is to be more powerful than either the Dreadnought or the Nassau, and other tremendous ships.

Later in the same year—we are still talking of 1907—Germany further complimented England by laying the keels of five terrific battle ships, each of which was to be more powerful than her own Nassau, each of which was to have 1,000 horsepower more driving force than the Dreadnought, and each of which was to have a displacement of 19,000 tons, as against the Dreadnought's 17,900. Here indeed was a remarkable tribute to the designing and constructive ability of the British admiralty. If imitation be flattery at its best, the English sea lords had been smothered with obsequious praise.

Still the English sea lords were not happy, or, to speak with more precision, they were beginning to become unhappy. It seemed, no doubt, as if the Germans were going a little too far in their practical recognition of Britain's superior battle ship building ability. Six colossal fighters begun in a single year are not a pleasing sight in the yards of a neighbor, even when they are but offshoots of the genius of one's self. And during the memorable year of 1907 Great Britain, therefore, recognized what had come to be whispered about as the "German menace" by laying down the keels of the St. Vincent, the Temeraire, and the Superb, the first two of which were to be of 250 tons greater displacement than the largest German ship that was under way.

British Admiralty Complaisant.

Again confidence was restored in the British admiralty—that is to say, the admiralty's confidence was restored in its ability to maintain the two-power standard. Indeed, the admiralty's confidence in itself was so great that when the question was asked in Parliament whether the two-power standard included the United States as one of the possible foes, an affirmative answer was given. And the reposeful condition of the admiralty was further increased by the fact that during the next year—1908—Germany begun no new first-class battle ships, while Great Britain laid the keel of the Collingwood, which was to be an improved Dreadnought of 19,500 tons displacement.

But if the British admiralty ever dozed into a dream, the English people were more wakeful. German activity in the Dreadnought line did not look good to them. And as they turned the matter over in their minds, it looked worse. The Kaiser, always at heart a hater of the English, as they believed, evidently plotted some evil against them. Perhaps he meant to invade England—why not, Lord Roberts said it could be done. And the German people, hearing what the English were saying about them, finally began to mutter so much that it seemed advisable for King Edward and Queen Alexandra to journey to Berlin, which they did last fall, to "cement the friendly relations that bound the two great nations," and show all the world that Briton and German loved each other dearly.

A Play's Influence.

But the cement that was used to fill up the cracks in the aforesaid friendly relations evidently was not properly mixed. Rumors began to sweep over England that Germany had secretly begun additional Dreadnoughts that were being rushed to completion. A statement to this effect was made in Parliament. The German admiralty denied it, and the British people didn't believe the denial. In each country the feeling grew that the other was planning to attack it. In England Du Maurier's play, "An Englishman's Home," came along and fanned this feeling into a frenzy. Recruits thronged the stations of the war office. If hostilities had been only sixty days away, the excitement could hardly have been greater.

All of this leads up to a profoundly important fact and a question. The fact is that the building of the Dreadnought practically destroyed the rest of the British navy and gave every other nation in the world a chance to begin almost on even terms with England in building the type of ships that will decide the battles of the future—an opportunity that Germany has accepted with prodigious enthusiasm.

The question is, "What form is the crisis likely to take that must soon end the exhausting rivalry of Great Britain and Germany in the building of $10,000,000 battle ships?"

This question was put to Lewis Nixon, a battle ship builder and the designer of the Oregon and a half dozen other American war ships.

"Fight It Out."

"I see only two ways that this contest can end," he said, "and but one way that it is likely to end. One way would be for the two nations to continue to match battle ships until one becomes financially exhausted and is willing to give up and drop back to a place in the list of second-rate powers. The other way is to fight it out.

"What I mean by that is this: Germany has more potential financial strength than England. Germany is increasing more rapidly than England in wealth and population. In a mere endurance contest, therefore, Germany would win, because her money would hold out longer.

"England knows this. And knowing it, England may end this contest very suddenly some day by forcing war on Germany. The time may come when the English government will say to itself, 'As the German navy stands to-day, we can whip it. As it will stand next year if we let her alone, we cannot defeat it because our resources are nearly at an end and Germany's navy a year hence, will be larger than our own.'

"Personally, I believe that is the way it will end. I expect to see within five years the most terrific war in the world's history between England and Germany.

"And mind you, if that war comes and England is beaten—and I would not be surprised if she should be—she will drop to the rank of Spain as an unimportant nation. She will drop because she will lose her maritime prestige, and foreign trade is all that has ever made England great. Already the Germans have made great inroads upon this trade. A few years ago British ships were everywhere and they were busy, while Germany was not regarded as a maritime nation. Now many British ships are idle, and the Germans are creating an enormous mercantile fleet. If one wants to go from almost any port in Europe to South America he is more than likely to learn that he must go on a German ship, and if, after reaching South America, he wants to buy a draft on an American or European bank, the chances are that a German bank will be the only one available to sell it to him. Germany plainly seeks to control the maritime trade of the world, and if she and England go to war the one that wins will have this trade for a generation at least."

What Colonies Might Do.

Mr. Nixon was reminded that the British colonies, several of which have already offered to build Dreadnoughts for the mother country, might enable her to continue matching battle ships with Germany for quite a while.

"It's true—they can," he replied, "but have you ever thought of this: That if England ever permits her colonies to begin building battle ships for her that this one act will bring about a revolutionary change in the government of the British empire? If Canada, New Zealand, and the states of the Australian commonwealth build battle ships for England, how long will it be before they will demand the right of helping to fix the foreign policy of England? In my opinion, it would be a mightly short time. And with so many dissimilar interests represented, England would give an exhibition that might be expected to resemble the present scramble of conflicting interests in the American Congress over the tariff."

"But, disregarding this possible phase of the case, is there any reason except national bankruptcy why Germany and England cannot go on building even greater battle ships—in other words, is there any insurmountable mechanical difficulty?"

"None whatever," Mr. Nixon replied. "Of course, the building of far greater ships than any that exist would necessitate the deepening of docks, but England has plenty of convict labor, and she can do anything in this line that she wants to do. In fact, I expect that the battle ships that will be built ten years from now will far exceed in size and cost anything that is now afloat or projected."

"Do you believe there will be 30,000-ton ships that will cost, say, $15,000,000?"

"I certainly do."

"Will the 30,000-ton ship be the limit?"

Battle Ships of the Future.

"I can't tell. As a matter of fact, there is no reason why even a 40,000 or 50,000 ton ship, that would render obsolete every battle ship now in existence, could not be built. And doubtless some such ship will some time be built, provided there be no revolution in the methods of naval warfare that would make it useless."

"What kind of a revolution in naval warfare might have such a result?"

"Well, here's one kind. Did you notice a little item in the newspapers when the fleet was crossing the Atlantic on its world trip about a man who had been injured by a current of electricity that was passing between two wireless telephones? Very few persons read it, because it was tucked away on the inside pages as a matter of little importance, but in my opinion it was very important. To me it suggests the idea that a discovery may be made any day that will enable one battle ship to discharge a tremendous volume of electricity at a ship perhaps five miles distant and instantly kill ever one on board. Marconi has shown that electricity can be sent without wires, and all that remains to be done before the electric battle ship can become a fact is to discover how to direct the current so that it will go only one way and not kill those aboard the ship that sends it. I believe this will some time be done."

Mr. Nixon was asked if he believed the British admiralty realized, when it determined to build the first Dreadnought, that it was taking a step that would render the rest of its navy obsolete.

Dreadnoughts Promise Victory.

"No, I don't," he replied. "I believe the admiralty was simply swept off its feet by what appeared to be the brilliancy of the conception of this enormous ship. But when the Dreadnought was built a new measuring stick was introduced by which all the navies in the world must be measured. The creation of the ship amounted to a revolution, in a sense. On ships already in existence it had the same effect that the battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac had on wooden ships. Before the Dreadnought's time Great Britain's two-power standard seemed secure. Now she is alarmed for fear she cannot long maintain a one-power standard as against Germany. She still has her old ships, and they are not without value, but they cannot win a war for her. The nation that has the most ships of the Dreadnought class is the one that will be victorious in future wars."

England has one ship of this class ready for business. Germany at the present moment has none, but she will complete two this year, the Nassau and the Sachsen, while England will complete three, the Bellerophon, the Temeraire, and the Superb. Next year Germany will complete five, the Baden, the Wurttemburg, the Beowulf, the Oldenburg, and the Frithjof. England will complete next year only three, the Collingwood, the St. Vincent, and the Vanguard. Two years hence Great Britain will have fourteen Dreadnoughts, provided she builds only six this year, which is the present programme, though it is expected that before the middle of the coming summer the number to be started this year will be increased to eight. Germany, on the other hand, in 1911, will have only ten Dreadnoughts, provided she has none under way that England does not know about, and provided she does not hasten the construction of those that are scheduled to be begun this year and next, which she can easily do. The Germans themselves say they have not nearly reached the capacity of their shipyards.

$15,000,000 Ships of War.

But here are the striking facts in this amazing situation. Almost within a decade the cost of battle ships has jumped from $2,000,000 or $3,000,000 to $10,000,000, and the $15,000,000 battle ship seems to be not far away. The obsoletization of all older craft by the building of the first Dreadnought gave Germany an opportunity which she seems to be trying to grasp, to wrest from England her naval supremacy and take with it her foreign trade. This, in turn, has led to a most remarkable contest between the two nations in the matching of Dreadnoughts, which, if continued even for a few years, would inevitably end in the national bankruptcy of one or both of the powers and the further impoverishment of great numbers of their people. England has on her hands such an unemployed problem and such a chronic poverty problem as she has never before been called upon to deal with, yet she has already decided to spend $90,000,000 on Dreadnoughts alone this year, and if she begins eight ships instead of six, this figure will be increased to $80,000,000. Her bill for new construction for the fiscal year that will end on June 30 next was regarded as heavy when the appropriation for it was made, but it was only $38,718,925. Add to this $120,000,000 for the navy's maintenance, $138,900,000 for the upkeep of the army, and the cost this year of keeping England prepared for war is found to be $345,518,925.

Germany, during the present fiscal year, expects to spend $27,000,000 for new naval construction, $83,000,000 for maintenance of the navy, and $123,000,000 for her army—$233,000,000 in all.

If ever there was a situation that was intended quickly to create either prostration or an explosion, this would seem to be such a situation. With battle ships at $10,000,000 apiece, and neither nation willing to be outdone by the other, the result, whatever it may be, cannot be long delayed.

A Considerate Captain.

From the Rochester Herald.

At Portsmouth, N. H., where they were to unveil a statue to the memory of T. B. Aldrich, during an author's argument on international copyright, Thomas Nelson Page broke up a rather acrimonious discussion by deftly interposing a story.

"After all," he said, "there is not much real help in that idea. It is such an idea as emanated from the mind of a hard, cruel sea captain.

"In midocean the cook approached the captain timidly.

"'Captain,' he said, 'the men are growlin' about the beef. They say they can't chaw it nohow. They say it's only fit to mend their sea boots with.'

"'How much beef are you giving 'em, cookie?' the captain asked.

"'A pound apiece a day, sir,' said the cook.

"'Well,' said the captain gently, 'give them half a pound apiece from now on. I should be sorry to force 'em to eat what isn't to their taste.'"

WILL WED DUKE.

COUNTESS SPOTTSWOOD-MACKIN.

Former St. Louis woman, now a resident of Paris, it is announced in a dispatch from Rome, is engaged to marry Due del Monte Masigliano, of the famous Neapolitan nobility. Mrs. Mackin's title is of the Papal order.

HOUSE SIX FEET WIDE

Stuck in Center of Best Residence District.

BELONGS TO LONDON CONVENT

Small Room Above Passageway Contains Nothing of Interest—Metropolis Might Be Termed "The City of Wasted Space" from Amount of the Unused and Vacant Land.

London, April 17.—This spring the hitherto inhospitable door of "the smallest house in London" is to be opened to such of the sightseeing tourists who visit the metropolis as care to penetrate into its tiny interior.

In the heart of ultrafashionable London, opposite Hyde Park, this little house is flanked on either side by imposing stone residences, but its own dimensions are, width six feet, depth thirty feet, and in height it reaches half way up the second story of its tall neighbors. It has a front door that leads into a long, narrow passageway. Walking through that and out at the back, one sees the only staircase the house possesses. It closely resembles a fire escape, as it is on the outside of the building and is scarcely more than an iron ladder.

At the top of the ladder is the one and only room, a long, narrow hall-like place lighted by one large window. It is easy to stretch from one wall to the other, so limited is its width. There is no fireplace, for no chimney was ever put in the house, and no water pipes have ever been laid in it. In fact, no one has attempted to live in it for a great many years past.

Example of Wasted Space.

London might well be christened "the city of wasted space," as any one knows who has roamed around the streets and seen the unused and unbuilt-upon land in otherwise crowded districts. This absurd, tiny, useless house right in the midst of one of the most fashionable residential districts in the metropolis is an example of wasted space, and the lanes and squares in other parts of the city which serve no purpose, and which might have been added to the buildings on either side of them, are further evidences.

Why the smallest house was not divided between the two residences which flank it is a problem. All the land around it belongs to a rich convent situated in an adjacent street. When the two large houses were put up evidently the builders leased just enough land from the convent to erect such houses as they wished and left between the two residences this six feet of space. It was not wide enough to cut a street through, and besides a street would only have led into the convent gardens. The sisters, perhaps fearing some such contingency, built this shell of a house which preserves the continuity of the handsome block of residences and nowadays is let with the house to the right of it, though it is absolutely distinct from it and has no connecting doors at all.

A White Elephant.

It is a most embarrassing possession indeed to the owners of the large house, for they must keep it painted on the outside and have fresh curtains and window boxes so that it will not spoil the appearance of the other houses in the row. Its one room is of course quite useless, for a five-foot-wide room with no heat or water is like Whitechapel in discomfort, yet the rent they would have to ask would be like Park Lane in its figures, so naturally the tiny house stands idle and unused and is a small but none the less undoubted white elephant.

The sisters of the convent have reserved the right to walk in at the front door and through the ground floor passage into the lane at the back which leads into their garden any time they please, but as a matter of fact they only avail themselves of the privilege once a year, and then they file slowly along it by twos, just to keep the right of way through their property according to English law.

Of course there is nothing of interest to see in the little house. The one room is distinctly ugly and evidently no one has ever lived in it long enough to take the slightest interest in decorating or embellishing it, so if tourists were able to avail themselves of the privilege of going through it it would only be interesting as an example of the absurdity of some of the English ground laws and land leases.

An Emperor's Menu Cards.

From the London Daily Mail.

The Emperor of Austria's collection of menu cards is without its equal in the world, writes our Vienna correspondent. Numbering 3,700 examples, it consists of cards used at court banquets on festival occasions, and scarcely a royal house in England is unrepresented.

The Austrian ambassadors at the various courts, knowing the Emperor's hobby, took every opportunity of collecting for him specimens from all parts of the world.

The cards are arranged under the towns from which they date, a shelf in the cabinet being devoted to each capital.

One of the most interesting and beautiful of all is the card designed in black marble, with ivory lettering, by a French artist, for the festival given by President Faure in honor of the visit of the Czar. A special cabinet is reserved for the menus of banquets given in honor of Bismarck.

Perishable Goods.

M. A. P.

Apropos of his name, Sir James Dewar, F. R. S., of the Royal Institution and other learned bodies, tells an amusing story of how, when in the Highlands of Scotland one summer, he stopped at a farmhouse for a cup of milk.

"What a superb place to live in," he remarked to the farmer.

"Ou, aye," he answered, "it's a' right; but hoo wad ye like to hae walk fifteen mile fik a time ye wanted a wee glass o' whisky?"

"Why don't you get a bottle and keep it in the house?" Sir James suggested.

The farmer shook his head sadly and said: "Whisky won't keep."

Two Too Much.

From the Argonaut.

Hans came in from his ranch, two miles from Olney, to buy a horse. "I've got the very thing you want," said Ike Bergman; "it's a fine road horse, five years old, sound as a quail, $175 cash down, and he goes ten miles without stopping." Hans threw up his hands skyward. "Not for me," he said—"not for me. I wouldn't give you 5 cents for him. I live eight miles from Astoria, and I'd haf to walk back two miles."

A Tip for Clyde Fitch.

From the London Globe.

"I've got a bright idea for my new farce," said the up-to-date young dramatist. "Instead of opening with a housemaid dusting the furniture and telling the audience the plot, I'm going to bring on a vacuum cleaner with phonographic attachment."

HER FAVOR IS TOURNEY PRIZE.

MRS. PERCY WINTHROP SMITH.

What resembles an old-time tourney of gallantry is amusing society at Nice. The prize is the favor of a young American girl, Mrs. Percy Winthrop Smith, of Philadelphia, whose romantic marriage several years ago created a sensation.